

## *Plant Criteria*

In order to identify which plants are of concern to New Hampshire, the ISC developed a set of criteria for species under consideration. The ISC created the criteria to meet the intent of the NH Invasive Species Act, ensure consistency, and enable the legislation to be proactive. The model chosen for this was based on the criteria developed by Connecticut and Massachusetts (developed by Les Mehrhoff, Chris Mattrick and others). To comply with the intent of the NH Invasive Species Act, the Connecticut and Massachusetts criteria were modified to reflect the following:

### *Regional Species Consideration:*

The Connecticut and Massachusetts' criteria was were broadened to be more comprehensive and allow information to be accepted from all areas within USDA Hardiness Zones 3-6 in the New England Region, which includes New York. USDA Hardiness Zones are useful geographic areas that were developed to map where similar growing conditions exist for plants. Zones 3-6 cover all of New Hampshire and the neighboring states and, represent habitat conditions for new plant species entering New Hampshire. This was a very important component when considering that climatic changes, land use changes, development and other factors have lead to a noticeable increase in new invasive plant introductions in New Hampshire. In addition, using plant Hardiness Zones was important to allow resource managers to prevent new invasive species introductions into the state rather than react once they have arrived.

### *Include All Cultivars and Varieties:*

Based on its review of scientific literature and in consultation with regional experts, the ISC unanimously agreed that all varieties and cultivars of prohibited plant species must also be prohibited, unless specific proof exists that a particular variety or cultivar is in fact unlike the original species "type" and can be proven not to exhibit invasive tendencies.

### *Evaluate Hybrids Individually:*

Unlike varieties and cultivars, hybrids consist of combinations of species, one or more of which may not possess invasive characteristics. For this reason, the ISC further agreed that hybrids would be evaluated individually based on their own merits (i.e., not assumed to be invasive even if one or more of the hybrid parents are invasive).

The criteria developed for the evaluation of plants for listing on the Prohibited or Restricted Invasive Species lists required 5 questions to be addressed from information derived from scientific literature, herbarium records, field observations, and any other credible forms of documentation. Criteria sheets were then completed for each of the selected plants. If the answer to all of the 5 questions was "YES", then the plant species qualified for prohibition. The ISC then took a vote to accept or reject the findings. If accepted, the plant would then be added to the New Hampshire Prohibited Invasive Species List. However, if there was insufficient information to answer all of the questions or one or more questions were answered "NO", then the plant was put on the New Hampshire Restricted Invasive Species List (Watch list). To be listed as a prohibited invasive plant, the taxon must meet the following criteria:

1. Is the taxon non native to New England?
2. Is the taxon naturalized in New England?
3. Does the taxon have the biologic potential for widespread dispersion and rapid establishment in USDA Plant Hardiness Zones 3-6?
4. Does the taxon have the biologic potential for dispersing over spatial gaps away from site of introduction in USDA Plant Hardiness Zones 3-6?
5. Does the taxon negatively affect native species, natural communities, commercial agriculture, forest crop production, or human health in USDA Plant Hardiness Zones 3-6?